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Development of good-neighbourly relations among Balkan States

Maintenance of international security

Letter dated 25 October 2000 from the Permanent Representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the joint statement of the Heads of State and Government of participating and observer countries to the South-East European Cooperation Process, done in Skopje on 25 October 2000 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 66 and 67, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Naste **Calovski**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 25 October 2000 from the Permanent Representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Informal summit of the Heads of State and Government of the countries participating in the South-East European Cooperation Process

Joint statement

Upon the invitation of President Boris Trajkovski, we the Heads of State and Government of the participating and the observer countries to the South-East European Cooperation Process, Mr. Emil Constantinescu, Mr. Vojislav Kostunica, Mr. Rexhep Meidani, Mr. Petar Stoyanov, Mr. Bulent Ecevit, Mr. Ljubco Georgievski, Mr. Costas Simitis, Mr. Zivko Radisic and Mr. Goran Granic met at an informal summit in Skopje, on 25 October 2000. Mr. Javier Solana, Secretary-General and High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union, and Mr. Bodo Hombach, Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, took part in the summit at the invitation of the host.

During the informal summit, we exchanged views on the recent developments in south-eastern Europe, especially in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and their positive impact on the stability and security in the region. Furthermore, we discussed the ongoing process of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe and we stated our strong commitment to its early implementation and to the undertaking of joint activities in the forthcoming period.

Welcoming the presence of the newly elected President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Mr. Vojislav Kostunica, and considering thus the temporary vacancy of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia's chair as hereby terminated, we congratulated the entire democratic opposition and citizens of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on the recent election victory and we paid tribute to their firm commitment to building democracy in their country. We expressed our full support for the commenced democratic process in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the peaceful transfer of power, believing that this would be of decisive importance for the further development of the country and for the welfare of its citizens. It would also contribute to the overall stabilization of the situation in the region. We strongly encouraged the commitment of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to follow a policy of good-neighbourly relations, reconciliation and mutual understanding in the region, as well as respect for the principle of equality and non-discrimination of all the successor States of the former Yugoslavia in their mutual relations.

In the light of such prospects, we welcomed the recent lifting of sanctions and the proposed inclusion of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe.

We believe that the South-East European Cooperation Process as a comprehensive framework for cooperation originating from the region, confirmed by the adoption of the Charter on Good-neighbourliness, Stability, Security and Cooperation in South-Eastern Europe, represents a solid basis for strengthening the

cooperation in the region. We expressed our commitment that the Process would assume a more important role in the future development of the region.

Stressing that Europe cannot be complete without our countries and our nations, we restated our commitment towards the European integration process as our strategic goal and as an inseparable part of the overall political, economic and social development of our countries.

Also, we underscored our commitment for further and constructive cooperation on the overcoming and on the resolution of all remaining issues and problems from the past in the spirit of equality, mutual understanding and good-neighbourliness.

Highly appreciating the efforts of the Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, we outlined our expectations with respect to the prompt implementation of the already selected projects from the "Quickstart Package", within the three Stability Pact working tables.

We reaffirmed our political commitment to democratic and economic reforms and regional cooperation, as well as to the consistent and full implementation of all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding peace, security and stability in the region.

We agreed that our common endeavour shall be oriented towards bringing about mature democratic political processes, based on pluralism and free and fair elections, grounded in the rule of law and with respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. We recognized the utmost importance of intensifying contacts and cooperation in the human dimension and in the social and cultural fields, and of strengthening democratic institutions and civil society and facilitating free circulation of information and ideas, as well as of citizens.

We agreed to hold our next regular summit meeting in Skopje, in February 2001.